The meeting was called to order at 5 p.m.

WAYS AND MEANS OF EXPEDITING THE WORK OF THE COMMITTEE ON THE ELIMINATION OF DISCRIMINATION AGAINST WOMEN (continued)

1. Ms. SCHÖPP-SCHILLING, Rapporteur, said that since the relevant section of the Committee's draft final report was not available, the Committee would not have time to complete work on the concluding comments. Accordingly, she proposed that the Committee should suspend, just for the current session, its practice of drafting concluding comments. Those members who had already drafted comments could give them to the Rapporteur so that they could be incorporated into the Committee's report.

2. Ms. BERNARD said that she could agree to suspend the practice for the current session given that the relevant section of the draft report was not yet available. The concluding comments could be condensed and their substance reflected in the section on suggestions and recommendations.

3. Ms. BARE agreed that it would be difficult to discuss the concluding comments in the absence of the draft report.

4. The CHAIRPERSON said that it was very late in the session to be proposing that the concluding comments should be dispensed with.

5. Ms. AOUIJ said that she was deeply concerned by the idea of dispensing with the concluding comments. Those comments contained the essence of the debate between the States parties and the Committee, and were of primary importance to the visibility of the Committee; moreover they provided very useful guidance to the States parties. So important a part of the Committee's work must not be neglected.

6. Ms. BUSTELO GARCIA DEL REAL suggested that the Committee should concentrate on the concluding comments for the remainder of the session.

7. Ms. OUEDRAOGO supported by Ms. KHAN said that they could not agree to suspending the practice of formulating concluding comments.

8. Ms. AYKOR said that the concluding comments were extremely important. She urged the Committee to do its best to complete them at the current session.

9. Ms. MUÑOZ GOMEZ said that the Committee should draw up guidelines for the concluding comments, detailing what they should include.

10. Ms. GARCIA-PRINCE said that suspending the practice of drafting concluding comments would seriously limit the Committee's functions. It should instead be seeking to expand those functions.

11. Ms. KASCHITZ (Division for the Advancement of Women), responding to a question from Ms. SCHÖPP-SCHILLING, said that, in accordance with a decision taken by the Committee at its thirteenth session (A/49/38, para. 816), concluding comments were to be incorporated into the Committee's report and

would not be distributed separately to States parties. As a rule, once the report had been translated, it was available to Committee members and States parties alike.

12. Ms. ABAKA said that the entire purpose of the concluding comments would be defeated if they were communicated to States parties as part of the Committee's report. The comments were intended to provide interim guidance to States parties. She inquired about the status of the comments which had been carried over from the previous session.

13. Ms. CARTWRIGHT said that the Committee should at least complete work on the comments which it had been unable to complete at its thirteenth session.

14. Ms. SINEGIORGIS pointed out that the Committee had already been advised by the Secretariat (CEDAW/C/SR.266, para. 49) that it would be improper to defer consideration of concluding comments to the following session. Accordingly, she proposed that the Committee should expedite work on the comments - perhaps through increased cooperation by members who had a particular interest in certain comments - adopt the comments at the current session and transmit them forthwith to States parties.

15. It was so decided.

OTHER MATTERS

16. Ms. BUSTELO GARCIA DEL REAL reiterated her request of a few days earlier for information on how summary records were prepared and when they would be available to Committee members and others for review. As an illustration of the problem, she noted that the summary records of the thirteenth session did not contain any mention of the Committee's decision to incorporate concluding comments into its report and, in fact some of the records were not available.

17. Ms. KASCHITZ (Division for the Advancement of Women) said that she did not have specific information on the production of summary records at United Nations Headquarters. She had only recently been able to complete her set of summary records of the thirteenth session.

18. Ms. ABAKA stressed that the availability of summary records was vital not only for Committee members but also for representatives of States parties who must verify their accuracy.

19. Ms. BUSTELO GARCIA DEL REAL pointed out that a Spanish version of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, which was part of a kit for the Beijing Conference, had omitted the phrase "including information and advice on family planning" from article 10 (h). She requested a correction.

20. Ms. SCHÖPP-SCHILLING proposed that the issues concerning summary records, the incomplete Spanish translation of the Convention and the concluding comments should be referred to working group I.

The meeting was adjourned at 6.05 p.m.